



State of California  
The Natural Resources Agency  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	High Desert Chipping Project		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Portions of SRA within the high desert communities of Piñon Hills, Phelan, Baldy Mesa, Oak Hills, Summit Valley, West Cajon Valley and Lucerne Valley	<b>COUNTY</b>	San Bernardino County
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will help reduce wildfire risk to habitable structures by providing locations where State Responsibility Area (SRA) residents can dispose of their green waste when conducting defensible space fuel reduction on their properties. The project will also consist of roadside brush clearing along ingress and egress access routes that are used by fire personnel and the public during wildfires. SRA residents will be allowed to drop off their green waste at either the Phelan, Lucerne Valley, or Apple Valley CAL FIRE stations on designated days. CAL FIRE crews will chip the vegetation into a bin or pile and burn onsite. The bin will be hauled to the local County dump for disposal. Roadside brushing treatments will consist of the removal of vegetation within 10 feet from the edge of the road prism. If any trees (i.e. Joshua trees) are encountered within the 10-foot width they will not be removed. Roadside vegetation will be cut using chainsaws. Crews will either chip the vegetation immediately after cutting it or stack it in a manner that will facilitate efficient chipping later. Chips will be scattered onsite to a chip depth layer of approximately three inches and not cover more than 75% of the ground. Approximately 20 acres a year will be treated through roadside brushing. The project is within creosote bush scrub habitat consisting primarily of creosote bush, rabbitbrush, sagebrush, brittlebrush, yucca, and Joshua trees. Elevation ranges from 3,000 – 4,500 feet. All ground based equipment will be operated from existing roads or disturbed areas. No new roads will be constructed. Work will be accomplished using CAL FIRE crews and/or contractors. This project will be ongoing for several years.

### EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 §15304 Minor Alterations to Land  
☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):  
☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)  
☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))  
☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

### REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under the Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) Categorical Exemption to CEQA. Class 4 is described as minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees. Including §15304 (i) Fuel management activities within 30 feet of structures to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation, provided that the activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. This exemption shall apply to fuel management activities within 100 feet of a structure if the public agency having fire protection responsibility for the area has determined that 100 feet of fuel clearance is required due to extra hazardous fire conditions. This project as proposed is to reduce hazardous fuels and improve roads for emergency access.

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact will occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE's BDU Headquarters in San Bernardino.

### DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

SEP 04 2018

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

  
Helge Eng, Deputy Director Date 8/31/18  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection